

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 and 10-21 are now pending in the application. Claims 1-9 stand rejected. Claim 9 has been cancelled herein. Claims 1-8 have been amended to correct various informalities. Support for newly added Claims 10-21 can be found throughout the application as originally filed. As such, no new matter has been presented. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

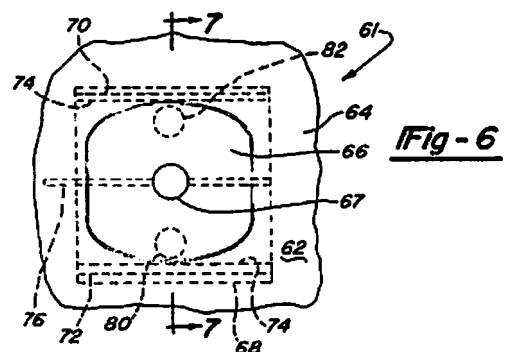
DRAWINGS

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the acceptance of the drawings filed with this application on April 3, 2006.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 AND 103

Claims 1, 3-5 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hartmeyer et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,492,363, hereinafter "Hartmeyer"). Claims 2 and 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartmeyer. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Initially, Applicant notes that Hartmeyer discloses an air bag (62) with a gas flow-regulating valve (64) having a pucker (66) with a vent (67) integrally formed in the air bag's outer membrane (66). See Col. 7, lines 26-29. An inner membrane (68) is retained within the outer membrane (66) along sewn edges (70, 72). See Col. 7, lines 29-31. Vents (80, 82)



are provided in the inner membrane (68) for expelling inflation gases into the gap formed by the pucker (66). *See Col. 7, lines 36-38.* The inner membrane (68) may be formed from rubber or elastic. *See Col. 7, lines 41 and 45-46.*

In view of the above discussion, Applicant asserts that Hartmeyer does not teach, suggest or disclose each and every element of Claim 1. In particular, Hartmeyer fails to disclose that the "...outer membrane [is] provided on the ***outside of the airbag*** so as to extend across at least part of the inner membrane and the vent-hole..." Instead, Hartmeyer discloses that the outer membrane (66) is integrally formed with the airbag (62). The Office Action attempts to remedy this deficiency by stating that Hartmeyer "teaches that it is contemplated to provide a separate outer member that is stitched to the airbag." *See Office Action dated June 20, 2008 at Page 3.* However, Hartmeyer simply discloses that it is possible to pre-assemble the valve to the outer membrane by sewing the whole valve into a hole in the outer membrane. *See Col. 4, lines 37-42.* Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Office to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b).

As Claims 2-8 directly or indirectly depend from Claim 1, they are similarly in condition for allowance. Additionally, Applicant asserts that amended Claim 7 has independently allowable subject matter as Claim 7 recites, "the outer membrane comprises a strip of fabric stitched to the airbag over the vent-hole for creating an outlet flow path from the vent-hole to open-to-atmosphere ends of the pucker." Applicant notes that Hartmeyer discloses that the "complementary piece of outer membrane which contains the pucker and forms the valve is then sewn into the hole." *See Col. 4, lines 39-42.* As such, Hartmeyer does not teach, suggest or disclose an outer

membrane having open-to-atmosphere ends, but rather Hartmeyer teaches a pre-assembled valve completely sewn into the airbag. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Office to reconsider and withdraw the rejections of Claims 3-5 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and Claims 2 and 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

NEW CLAIMS

New Claims 10-21 are added herein for consideration. Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claim 10, as well as Claims 11-16, dependent therefrom, and independent Claim 17, as well as Claims 18-21, dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

Stephen T. Olson
Reg. No. 36,626
Attorneys for Applicant

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

STO/AKC/kgg